THE SHATTERED EARTH CHRONICLES

13 ETERNITY

$1.95/$2.50 in Canada

An Ex-Mutants Universe Title

THE NEW HUMANS

NEW HUMANS

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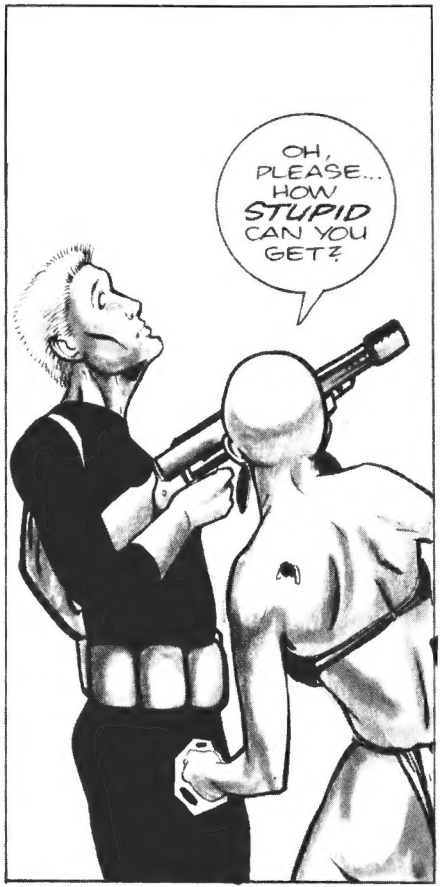

The New Humans: Placed in suspended animation by the United States government as part of the top secret Jupiter Project, Duke Goldberg, Kelly Brock, Calvin Gordon, and Roger Brunner awaken 30 years later to discover a world filled with deadly radiation; its inhabitants mutated victims of the most deadly war mankind has ever fought.

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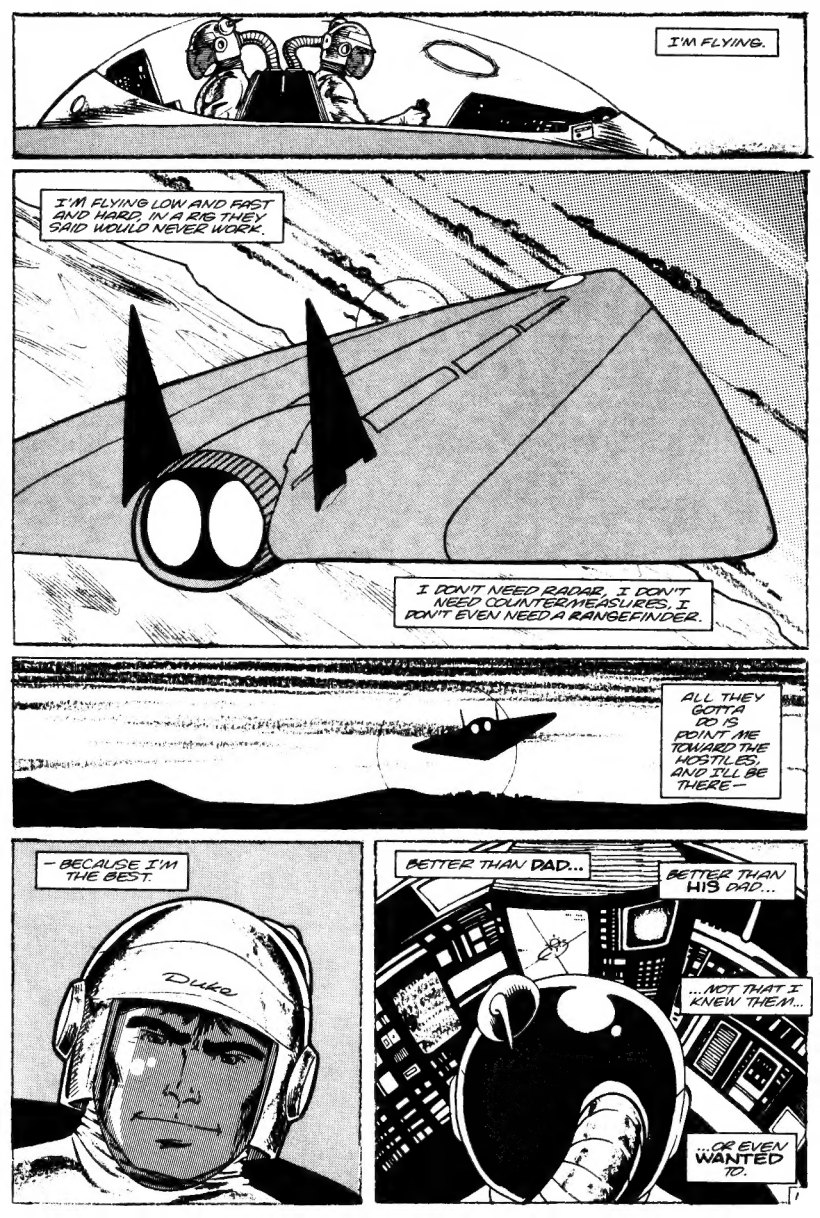
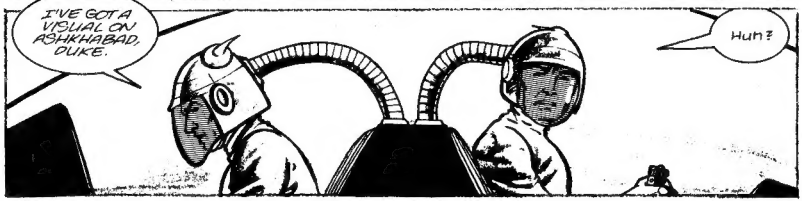
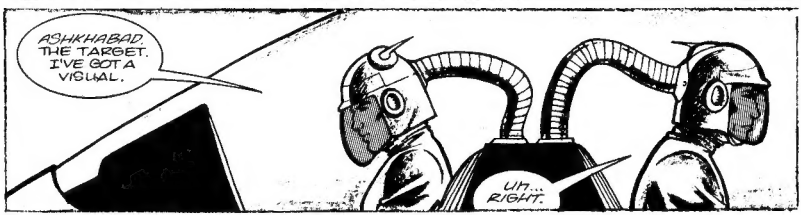

I'M FLYING.
I'M FLYING LOW AND FAST AND HARD, IN A RIG THEY SAID WOULD NEVER WORK.
I DON'T NEED RADAR, I DON'T NEED COUNTERMEASURES, I DON'T EVEN NEED A RANGEFINDER.
ALL THEY GOTTA DO IS POINT ME TOWARD THE HOSTILES, AND I'LL BE THERE—
— BECAUSE I'M THE BEST.
Duke
BETTER THAN DAD...
BETTER THAN HIS DAD...
...NOT THAT I KNEW THEM...
...OR EVEN WANTED TO.

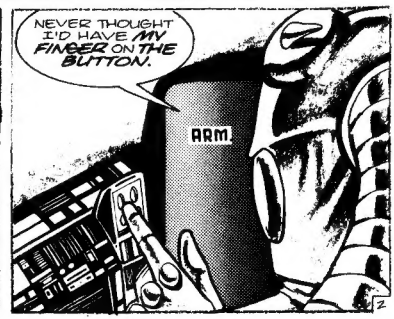
GRANDPA FLEW WITH THE FLYING TIGERS, AGAINST THE JAPS—
—DAD AGAINST COMMIES, OVER VIETNAM—
—THEY WERE GOOD, BUT I KNOW I COULD HAVE SHOT THEM DOWN.

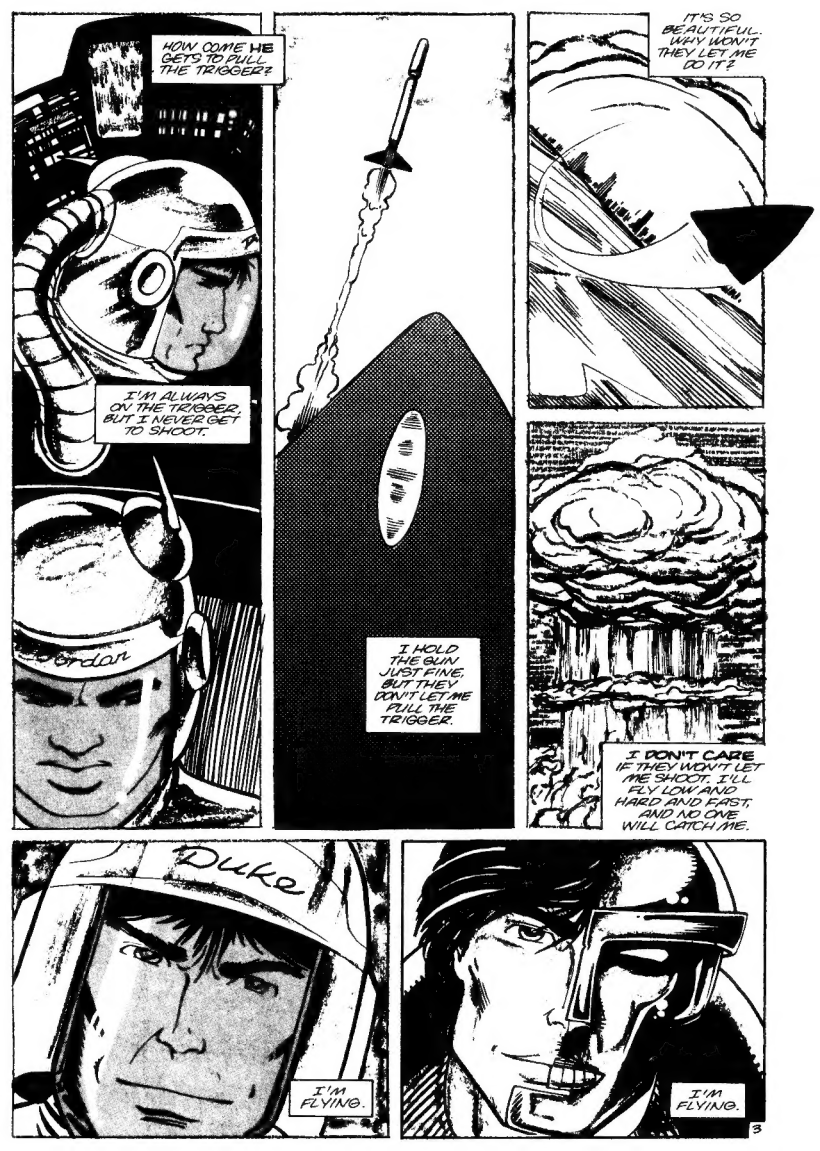
BECAUSE I'M THE BEST.
—AND I DON'T NEED ANYBODY.


I'VE GOT A VISUAL ON ASHKHABAD, DUKE.
Huh?


ASHKHABAD. THE TARGET. I'VE GOT A VISUAL.
UH... RIGHT.

IT'S TIME TO DELIVER THE MAIL.


NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE MY FINGER ON THE BUTTON.
ARM


HOW COME HE GETS TO PULL THE TRIGGER?
I'M ALWAYS ON THE TRIGGER, BUT I NEVER GET TO SHOOT.
I HOLD THE GUN JUST FINE, BUT THEY DON'T LET ME PULL THE TRIGGER.
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL. WHY WON'T THEY LET ME DO IT?
I DON'T CARE IF THEY WON'T LET ME SHOOT. I'LL FLY LOW AND HARD AND FAST, AND NO ONE WILL CATCH ME.
Duke
I'M FLYING.
I'M FLYING.

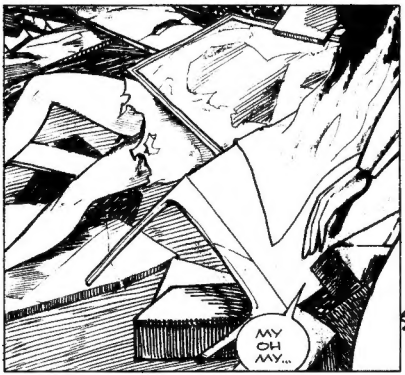
THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY, PART 3: "ENEMY OF MY ENEMY"

BECAUSE MY EYE IS THE BEST.
I'M FLYING AND I CAN SEE EVERYTHING.
NOT ONLY DOES HE GET TO DROP THE BOMB...
MAGNIFICATION 2x
2x
...BUT HE GETS TO LOOK AT THE BODIES, TOO.
DIRTY CALVIN, ALWAYS MOVING IN ON MY TERRITORY—
16x
—TAKING KELLY GETTING TO SHOOT—
32x
—THINKING HE'S BETTER THAN ME. LIKE I NEED HIM—
YEAH... I NEED HIM—
—LIKE A HOLE IN THE HEAD.
5

A HOLE IN THE HEAD.
CALVIN HAS MULTIPLE HOLES IN HIS HEAD.
PERFECT ROUND HOLES GROSS SCAR TISSUE CAN DO LITTLE TO HIDE.
A SERIES OF HOLES DRILLED THROUGH SKULL AND BRAIN BY THE SINISTER SAUCER MEN OF ATLANTIS IN PURSUIT OF SOME SATURNINE GOAL...
...AND THROUGH THOSE HOLES SNAKED THE TENDRILS OF AN ALIEN CONTROL DEVICE.
STEEL WORMS ATE HIS BRAIN.
THEY ATE THE BRAIN AND DESTROYED THE MAN, LEAVING BEHIND A REMORSELESS FLESHY MECHANISM—
—THOSE PORTIONS OF HIS MIND GOVERNING VOLITION IRREVOCABLY DESTROYED.
BUT DEEP INSIDE, THE GOOD MAN REMAINS—

—NOT SO YOU'D NOTICE.

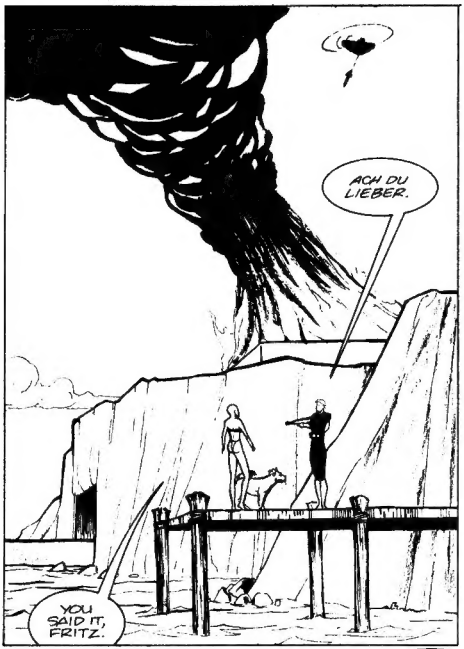
MAYBE SOMEONE IS STILL ALIVE UNDER ALL THIS.


MY OH MY...

...BURIED TREASURE.

NO

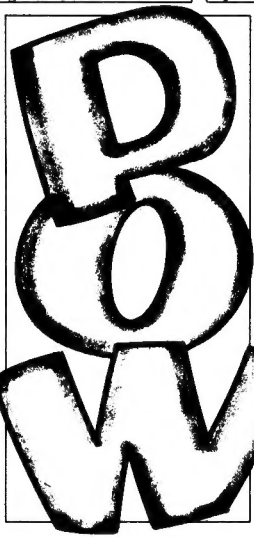
WELL, MAYBE YOU WOULD NOTICE...
IF YOU LOOKED AT PRECISELY THE CORRECT TIME.


ACH DU LIEBER.
YOU SAID IT, FRITZ.

FIRST ALL THAT SHOOTING, THEN THE BLAST, AND NOW YOUR AIR COVER FLIES AWAY, DRAGGING ONE OF MY TEAM MATES BY THE HEAD.
SOME DAYS IT JUST DOESN'T PAY TO GET OUT OF THE BUNKER.

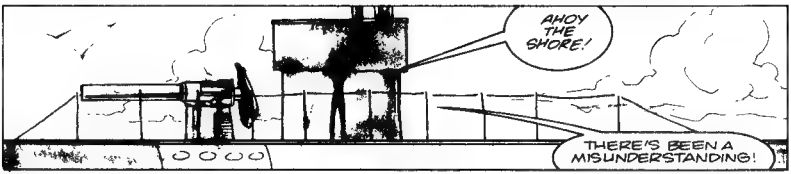
WHAT'S THAT?!

WUH?!
OH, PLEASE... HOW STUPID CAN YOU GET?


DOW

OUT COLD.
YEAH, THAT WAS TOO EASY.

ON THE OTHER HAND...


AHOY THE SHORE!
THERE'S BEEN A MISUNDERSTANDING!

MISUNDERSTANDING MY EYE!

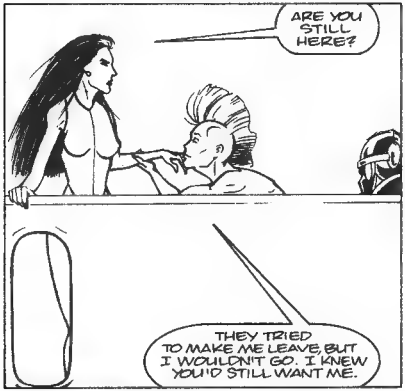
BRRRRRAP!
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU MISSED..
I DIDN'T.
I SEE.
DOES THIS MEAN YOU FORGIVE OUR MISUNDER-STANDING?
NO. IT MEANS WE'RE EVEN.
SO YOU'VE NO OBJECTION TO MY COMING ASHORE.
WHO'S GONNA STOP YOU?
YOU'RE IN A SUBMARINE, PINHEAD.

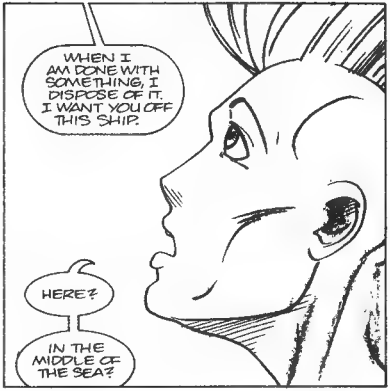
I MUST SAY COUNTESS CROESUS' TASTE HAS IMPROVED IN BODYGUARDS—SHE HAS IN THE PAST EXCLUSIVELY EMPLOYED PRETTY LITTLE BOYS.
SAY WHAT?
BEEE CARRRE-FUL, FISH...
YES... QUITE AN IMPROVEMENT. YOU ARE A VALKYRIE AND THE SPEAKING HOUND IS REMARKABLE AS WELL.
DID I GIVE YOU A HEAD WOUND?
HARDLY!
AND HOW IS MY GOOD FRIEND, THE COUNTESS?
YOU TELL ME, JUNIOR.
WELL, VON KLUGE... I HOPE YOU'RE SATISFIED.
MY VILLA IS RUINED!
THIS LATEST DESTRUCTION WAS NOT MY IDEA, COUNTESS. I FEAR LADY VISCONTI HAS BETRAYED ME.
REALLY? SO WE'RE IN THE SAME BOAT, THEN?
NOT PRECISELY.
THIS RAID COST ME GOOD MEN.
... BUT I AM ALWAYS CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN A RESERVE.

LATER, SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC.
U.S. HACK
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS?
IT'S AN INHIBITOR BOLT. THIS IS WHAT'S BEEN IN YOUR WAY.
WITH THIS BOLT REMOVED, YOU ARE YOUR OWN! MAN. IF YOU'VE ANY BRAINS LEFT AT ALL, YOU CAN DO AS YOU PLEASE.
IF I REPLACE THE BOLT, YOU ARE AGAIN A MINDLESS THRALL.
I GIVE YOU YOUR FREEDOM.
IN RETURN I ASK FOR YOUR HELP.
WORK FOR ME AND YOU WILL BE RICHLY REWARDED. YOUR SLIGHTEST WISH WILL BE INSTANTLY FULFILLED.
I WOULD LIKE SOME ICE CREAM.
SNAP!
EASILY DONE!

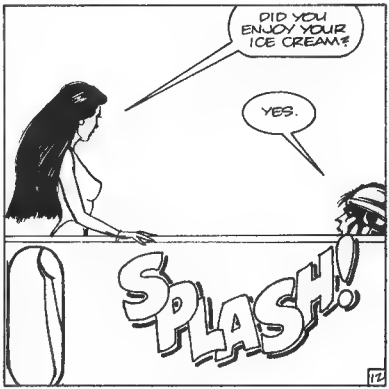
MIND YOU, I COULD HAVE LEFT YOU THE WAY YOU WERE, BUT I VALUE INDIVIDUAL *INITIATIVE* FROM MY ALLIES.

MISTRESS?! WHEN DID YOU RETURN?


ARE YOU STILL HERE?
THEY TRIED TO MAKE ME LEAVE, BUT I WOULDN'T GO. I KNEW YOU'D STILL WANT ME.


WHEN I AM DONE WITH SOMETHING, I DISPOSE OF IT. I WANT YOU OFF THIS SHIP.
HERE?
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEA?

YES, RIGHT HERE.
NOW, MISTRESS?
NOW.


DID YOU ENJOY YOUR ICE CREAM?
YES.
SPLASH!

BACK ABOARD THE CHALLENGER II...

I SUGGEST WE TRADE INFORMATION. ONE FOR ONE.

FAIR ENOUGH. YOU FIRST.

I HAVE THE UPPER HAND. YOU FIRST.

ALL RIGHT. THE *BISHOP* IS DEAD.

TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW.

I DIDN'T DO IT... I WISH I HAD, BUT IT WASN'T ME.

I BELIEVE YOU. BUT IF IT WASN'T YOU—AND IT WASN'T ME—THEN WHO?

VISCONTI?

I DON'T THINK SO. I BELIEVE SHE WAS HONEST WITH ME—TO A POINT—DURING OUR BRIEF ALLIANCE. AND SHE SAID SHE DID NOT KILL THE BISHOP.

THEN WHO? BARON SINISALO?

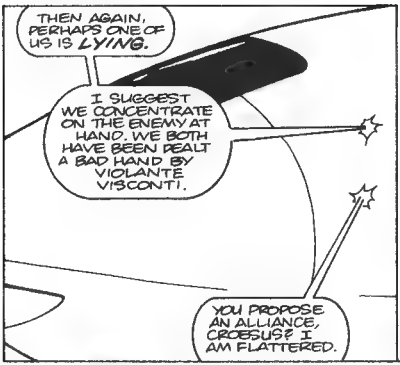
NOT HIS STYLE.

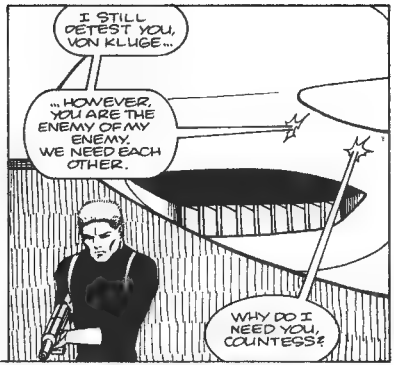
WHO DOES THAT LEAVE?

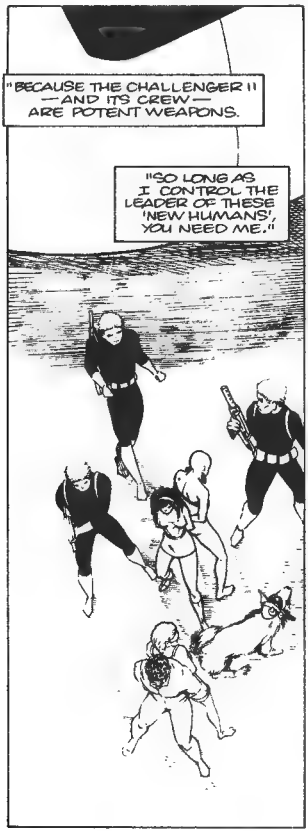
NO ONE, COUNTESS. AND THAT HAS ME WORRIED.

IF IT WASN'T A METHUSELAH SOCIETY MEMBER, THEN MAYBE WE'RE UNDER ATTACK FROM WITHOUT---

—AT *PRECISELY* THE MOMENT OF OUR GREATEST *WEAKNESS*.


THEN AGAIN, PERHAPS ONE OF US IS LYING.
I SUGGEST WE CONCENTRATE ON THE ENEMY AT HAND. WE BOTH HAVE BEEN DEALT A BAD HAND BY VIOLANTE VISCONTI.
YOU PROPOSE AN ALLIANCE, CROESUS? I AM FLATTERED.


I STILL DETEST YOU, VON KLUGE...
...HOWEVER, YOU ARE THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY. WE NEED EACH OTHER.
WHY DO I NEED YOU, COUNTESS?


"BECAUSE THE CHALLENGER" — AND ITS CREW — ARE POTENT WEAPONS.
"SO LONG AS I CONTROL THE LEADER OF THESE 'NEW HUMANS', YOU NEED ME."

I THOUGHT YOU'D GIVEN UP LITTLE GIRLS, COUNTESS.
NOT ENTIRELY. SHE IS MINE — SHE JUST DOESN'T KNOW IT YET.

AND THE OTHERS?
WE KILL THEM. UNLESS YOU OBJECT?
SAVE THE BALD WOMAN. OTHERWISE, WE ARE IN ACCORDANCE.
IN FACT, I —

AAAAAHH!
THIS IS OUR CHANCE —MOVE IT!
HUH?
C'MON, KELLY, —GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN CHARGE OF THIS GROUP— DO SOMETHING!
I—
YOU'RE RIGHT.
DAMN!
POW!
AGH*!
15

WHAT'S WRONG, KELLY? KILLING HIM SAVED OUR LIVES.

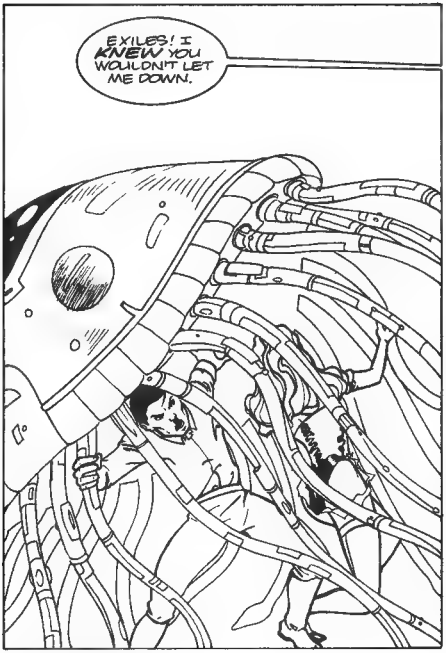
I KNOW—
I WAS SHOOTING TO WOUND.

HA! AHHAHA! HAHAHA-
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

ALL THAT BLOOD!
AHAAHA
JUST GREAT.. IT'S JUST GREAT!

YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HIM.
I KNOW.
IT'S PAST TIME I DID A LOT OF THINGS.

WELL, I'LL BE...

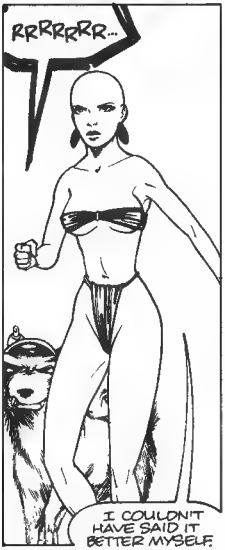

EXILES! I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T LET ME DOWN.

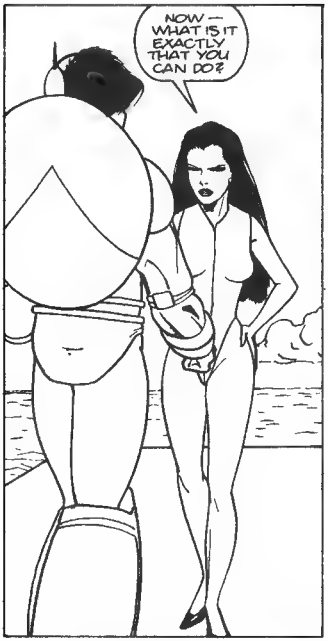
MY GOD, ROGER —WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU... I WAS JUST WAITING FOR THE RIGHT TIME.

IT'S THE EXILES' MACHINE INTELLIGENCE. IT MADE A HOME OF OUR COMPUTERS WHEN THE NEMESIS DESTROYED THE EXILES' MOTHERSHIP.
I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO REMEMBER IT YOU WEREN'T FEELING WELL WHEN IT HAPPENED.

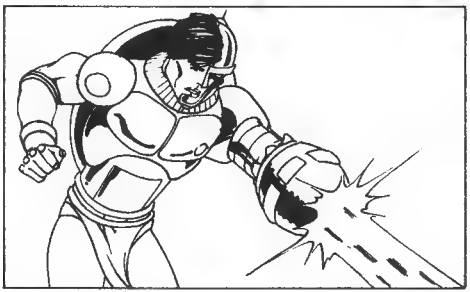
BUT THIS...THIS THING, LIVING IN OUR COMPUTER?
SURE. THE EXILES REDESIGNED OUR SHIP. REMEMBER? AND I'VE BEEN LEARNING A LOT FROM THEM.
I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THIS.

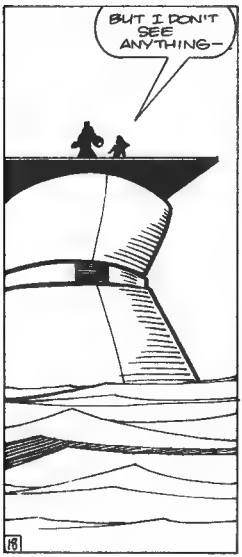
HEY, YOU CAN'T ARGUE WITH RESULTS.

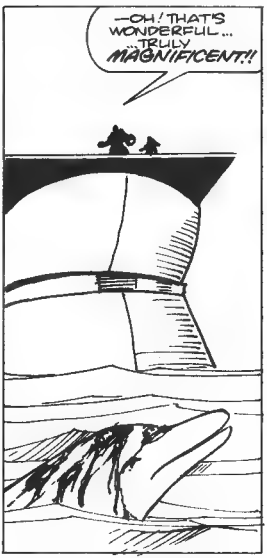

RRRRRR...
I COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER MYSELF.


NOW — WHAT IS IT EXACTLY THAT YOU CAN DO?

I CAN KILL.
EXCELLENT. KILL SOMETHING.




BUT I DON'T SEE ANYTHING—


—OH! THAT'S WONDERFUL... TRULY MAGNIFICENT!!

THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL, DUKE. WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A GREAT TEAM.
IT'S REALLY A SHAME ALL YOUR BEST PARTS GOT BLOWN AWAY.

HEAR THAT, DAD? I'M A KILLER. THE LADY SAID SO.
I BET YOU WERE A KILLER, TOO— BUT I'M BETTER.
I NEVER GOT SHOT DOWN. I WAS NEVER CAPTURED.
THEY BLEW MY BODY TO BITS, BUT I NEVER GAVE UP.
I CAME BACK. NOTHING COULD KEEP ME AWAY.
I DIDN'T NEED YOU TO COME BACK. I FIGURED OUT EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW ON MY OWN.
I KNOW HOW TO BE A MAN.
I DON'T NEED YOU AT ALL

WITH VIOLANTE VISCONTI KILLING MARINE MAMMALS, BISHOP DEMAGOGUE DEAD, COUNTESS CROESUS AND FIELD MARSHAL VON KLUGE WRESTLING WITH ALIEN JELLYFISH...
...ONLY ONE MEMBER OF THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY IS UNACCOUNTED FOR.

BARON SINISALO DOES NOT PLOT OR PLAN OR MOVE AGAINST HIS COLLEAGUES—
OPERA
—HE MERELY WAITS, AND PURSUES HIS OWN PLEASURE.
ACROSS THE STAGE OF THE HISTORIC PARIS OPERA HOUSE, PERFORMERS CAVORT, THEIR MUTATED THROATS ADDING AN INHUMAN QUALITY TO THEIR STAGING OF DON GIOVANNI—

—AN ANCIENT OPERA ENACTED WITH REMARKABLE SKILL BY PERFORMERS NO LESS EARNEST FOR THEIR DEFORMITIES.

AN OPERA THAT, FOR ALL ITS ALIEN ELEGANCE, PLAYS FOR A HOUSE NEARLY EMPTY—
—BUT FOR ONE.

BARON SINISALO COMPENSATES THE PERFORMERS FOR THEIR SKILL—

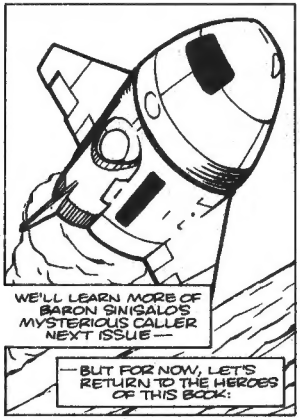
—WARMING THE OPERA HOUSE WITH THE GLOW OF HIS ADMIRATION AND APPRECIATION, MORE THAN FILLING THE VOID CAUSED BY THE OPERA'S SPARSE ATTENDANCE.

YEARS AGO, WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG MAN, HE HAUNTED THIS PLACE LIKE A PHANTOM—
USING HIS VAST WEALTH TO LURE EUROPE'S GREATEST PERFORMERS TO HIS PRODUCTIONS, BUT REMAINING FOREVER ALOOF AND UNSEEN WITHIN THE CONFINES OF HIS PRIVATE BOX.
BARON SINISALO HAS ALWAYS ENJOYED HIS SOLITUDE AS MUCH AS HIS MUSIC —

—AND WOE TO THE MAN WHO INTERRUPTS HIS PLEASURE—
EXCUSE ME, BARON... THIS WAS DELIVERED FOR YOU

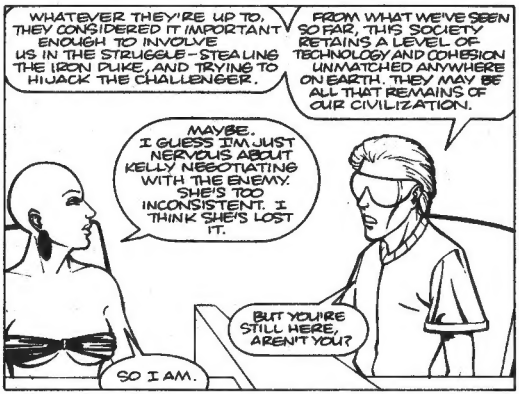
HIM? HERE?

—THUS IT MUST BE IMPORTANT BUSINESS, INDEED, TO CAUSE BARON SINISALO TO LEAVE A PERFORMANCE BEFORE IT IS COMPLETE.


WE'LL LEARN MORE OF BARON SINISALO'S MYSTERIOUS CALLER NEXT ISSUE—
—BUT FOR NOW, LET'S RETURN TO THE HEROES OF THIS BOOK:

I SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE ALONG WITH THIS. DUKE MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
MAYBE NOT—BUT CONSIDER WHAT WE'VE STUMBLED ACROSS.

A SECRET SOCIETY, PERHAPS GLOBAL IN SCOPE, FIGHTING AMONGST THEMSELVES OVER SOME UNKNOWN PRIZE.


WHATEVER THEY'RE UP TO, THEY CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO INVOLVE US IN THE STRUGGLE—STEALING THE IRON DUKE, AND TRYING TO HIJACK THE CHALLENGER.
FROM WHAT WE'VE SEEN SO FAR, THIS SOCIETY RETAINS A LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY AND COHESION UNMATCHED ANYWHERE ON EARTH. THEY MAY BE ALL THAT REMAINS OF OUR CIVILIZATION.
MAYBE. I GUESS I'M JUST NERVOUS ABOUT KELLY NEGOTIATING WITH THE ENEMY. SHE'S TOO INCONSISTENT. I THINK SHE'S LOST IT.
BUT YOU'RE STILL HERE, AREN'T YOU?
SO I AM.

YOU SEEM TO BE TAKING THIS TERRIBLY WELL.
OUR SOCIETY IS A PRAGMATIC ONE.

YOU'VE GOT US AT A DISADVANTAGE, SO WE PLAY IT YOUR WAY.
FOR NOW.
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY.
OF COURSE WE WILL— UNLESS YOU KILL US, WHICH I DOUBT YOU WILL. WE CAN OUTLAST ANY EXILE OR IMPRISONMENT YOU CAN DEVISE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
NOT SO FAST, DEAR.
WE LEAD YOU TO YOUR MISSING TEAMMATE AND WE GAIN OUR LIVES.
—THAT WAS OUR BARGAIN.
WE HAVE ALREADY HINTED THERE IS MUCH YOU DO DO NOT KNOW.
PERHAPS WE COULD BECOME ALLIES, AND THEN YOU WOULD LEARN MORE.
IN THE MEANTIME, WE WILL HUSBAND YOUR RESOURCES. SUFFICE IT TO SAY YOU HAVE LITTLE IDEA OF WHAT YOU'VE GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO.
WAIT A SECOND. IT WAS YOU WHO ATTACKED US—
WE'VE GOT SOMETHING, KELLY—
—SENSORS HAVE PICKED UP A SHIP, RIGHT ABOUT WHERE THEY SAID IT WOULD BE.
THAT WILL BE VISCONTI'S YACHT— SHE IS SO PREDICTABLE!

IS THE YACHT ARMED, ROGER?
WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT—
— I DOUBT THEY'VE GOT ANYTHING THAT CAN BRING DOWN THE CHALLENGER. WE'VE GOT DEFENSES THEY CAN'T EVEN DREAM OF
GRANTED— BUT NOW THAT WE'RE HERE, WE NEED A PLAN OF ACTION.
I HOPED YOU WOULD HAVE WORKED SOMETHING OUT BY NOW.
THAT DOESN'T HELP, ROGER.
I KNOW VIOLANTE VISCONTI—SHE WON'T SURRENDER YOUR FRIEND WITHOUT A FIGHT—
FURTHERMORE, SHE'LL HAVE A TRICK UP HER SLEEVE.
LOOK OUT— IT'S THE IRON DUKE!
US HACK
JAM THAT MISSILE, ROGER!
I CAN'T— CONTROLS AREN'T RESPONDING! I DON'T GET IT!
NEXT ISSUE—
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

King Spyder